



**Orange Day, 25<sup>th</sup> March 2017**

**Violence against Women and Girls with Disabilities**

## **BACKGROUND**

The 25<sup>th</sup> of every month has been designated “Orange Day” by the [United Nations Secretary-General’s Campaign UNiTE to End Violence against Women](#), to raise awareness and take action to end violence against women and girls. As a bright and optimistic colour, orange represents a future free from violence against women and girls for the UNiTE Campaign. Orange Day calls upon civil society, governments, and UN partners to mobilize people and highlight issues relevant to preventing and ending violence against women and girls, not only once a year on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (25 November), but every month.

In 2015, all 193 Member States of the United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Through its 17 goals, Agenda 2030 calls for global action over the next 15 years to address the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social, and environmental. All SDGs are fully integrated with one another; thus, we cannot think of them in isolation.

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 recognizes gender equality and the empowerment of women as a key priority pledging that “no one will be left behind.” Building on this vision, throughout 2017, the UNiTE campaign will mark all Orange Days (25<sup>th</sup> of every month) under the overarching theme “**Leave No One Behind: End Violence against Women and Girls**” to underscore its commitment towards reaching the most underserved.

## ORANGE DAY

This Orange Day, 25 March 2017, the Campaign will highlight the issue of **Violence against Women and Girls with Disabilities**.

Disability is referenced throughout the Sustainable Development Goals and [explicitly mentioned 11 times](#) in relation to education, growth and employment, inequality, accessibility of human settlements, as well as data, monitoring and accountability. Any measure taken to achieve Goal 5 and eliminate all forms of violence against ALL women and girls must include those with disabilities.

Women and girls with disabilities are at a greater risk of violence and abuse while facing difficulties accessing preventive and protection services than those without.<sup>i</sup> **Studies estimate that these women are 1.5 to 10 times more likely to be abused, either physically or sexually, by a family member or caregiver. They may even be up to 4.2 times more likely to have their activities and whereabouts restricted by their intimate partners,<sup>ii</sup> and their risk of sexual abuse is at least two times greater than for other women.<sup>iii</sup>** Other risk factors include social exclusion, limited mobility, lack of support structures and communication barriers.

Preventing and responding to violence can be particularly challenging for women with disabilities. There is a lack of education and training regarding information about abusive behavior, rights, access to services and legal recourse.<sup>iv</sup> Often, women and girls with disabilities have no opportunity to demand justice. In addition, the justice system may not know or understand the specific challenges that women with disabilities face.

Administrators could potentially leave these women more exposed to future violence when they seek to expose abuse and ask for help.<sup>v</sup>

### SOME RELEVANT PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS:

- In [Tanzania](#), **UN Women** worked with gender advocates to support the inclusion of women, youth and persons with disabilities in the electoral process to strengthen their political participation and leadership. UN Women also gives visibility to female leaders with disabilities, including through [iKNOW Politics](#), the International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics, which has featured Kerryann F. Ifill, President of the Senate of Barbados - the first woman, disabled and youngest person to be elected to this role (at 38).
- **UNFPA's [WE DECIDE initiative](#)** aims to strengthen the voices and participation of young people with disabilities on the issues and policies that affect them the most. Some examples include, increasing access to sexual and

reproductive health information and care, preventing and addressing gender-based violence, ending discrimination, and promoting social inclusion.

- [UNICEF's Child Protection Strategy](#) recognizes that effective child protection systems should strengthen participation, development and inclusion of children with disabilities, and their caregivers, as well as address social attitudes and perceptions. Legislation, policies and [attitudes that fail to recognize these children](#) could increase discrimination and their vulnerability to violence, abuse and exploitation.
- To end violence against women with disabilities, the Leonard Cheshire Disability Zimbabwe Trust, a grantee of the [UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women](#), has reached nearly 500 women and girls with disabilities including 93 survivors of violence with information on violence against women and assistance in reporting procedures in 10 Zimbabwean districts.

### TAKE ACTION THIS ORANGE DAY!

- **Wear orange** on 25 March to show your support for fighting violence against women and girls with disability. Share your orange photos @SayNo\_UNiTE
- **Host a discussion** to explore the issue of violence against women and girls with disabilities. Invite civil society organizations working with disabilities, and individuals with disabilities to participate.
- **Inform yourself!** [UNDESA's Toolkit](#) on Disability provides practical tools on various disability-related issues to all those with an interest in the inclusion of persons, and especially women and girls, with disabilities in society and development.
- **Gender-based Violence Practitioners!** Check out the Women's Refugee Commission's "I See That It Is Possible" [toolkit](#) to learn about how to build **disability inclusion into your work**.
- **Raise awareness** about the issue and spread the word by sharing our social media messages with your networks.

### USEFUL RESOURCES

- The Women's Refugee Commission's toolkit on [Building Capacity for Disability Inclusion in Gender-Based Violence Programming in Humanitarian Settings](#)
- The [report on the "Making it Work Initiative"](#) by Handicap International identifies and describes eleven good practices in ten countries which were developed by women to eliminate violence against women and girls with disabilities.

- [Disability Rights, Gender, and Development](#) - A Resource Tool for Action, developed by the Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Population Fund and the Wellesley Centers for Women
- The [discussion paper](#) **"Using the human rights framework to promote the rights of children with disabilities"** provides an analysis of the synergies of three human rights treaties from the perspective of the rights of children with disabilities: the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA MESSAGES**

### **TWITTER**

It's #OrangeDay! Wear orange and say NO to violence against women & girls with disabilities

<http://bit.ly/1fXiNmW> v @SayNO\_UNiTE

This #OrangeDay, learn more about the issue of violence against women and girls with disabilities:

<http://bit.ly/1fXiNmW> @SayNO\_UNiTE

Women with disabilities are at a greater risk of violence & abuse. This #OrangeDay focuses on #VAW with disabilities <http://bit.ly/1fXiNmW>

Stop violence against women w/ disabilities. This #OrangeDay calls for #equalrights & a life free of violence for all

<http://bit.ly/1fXiNmW>

### **FACEBOOK**

Women and girls with disabilities are at a greater risk of violence and abuse. Studies estimate that women with disabilities are 1.5 to 10 times more likely to be abused, either physically or sexually, by a family member or caregiver than women without disabilities. This month, the UNiTE campaign takes a closer look at the issue of violence against women and girls with disabilities. Find out more: <http://bit.ly/1fXiNmW> v [@SayNO-UNiTE to End Violence against Women] #OrangeDay

"I have met people who used me because they could tell I was vulnerable," said Cashelle Dunn, a 26-year-old disability advocate from Women with Disabilities Australia. Learn more about how she and Abia Akram, a 34-year-old disability rights advocate from Pakistan, are working to change this: <http://bit.ly/2niaMWa> v [@SayNO-UNiTE to End Violence against Women] #OrangeDay

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<sup>i</sup> Report of the Secretary-General on the Review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (E/CN.6/2015/3), 15 December 2014, para 90.

<sup>ii</sup> Astbury J. and Walji F. 2013. "Triple Jeopardy: Gender-based violence and human rights violations experience by women with disabilities in Cambodia." Australia Aid, Australia.

Hughes, K et al, 2012, 'Prevalence and risk of violence against adults with disabilities: a systematic review and metaanalysis of observational studies', *Lancet*, 379 (9826), pp 621 – 1629.

<sup>iii</sup> Women With Disabilities Australia CRPD 2013. Submissions to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Half-day of General Discussion on Women and Girls with Disabilities – 17 April 2013: all these submissions are available at

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRPD/Pages/DGD17April2013.aspx>

<sup>iv</sup> Women Enabled CRPD 2013. Women With Disabilities Australia CRPD 2013. Equality and Human Rights Commission (England and Wales) CRPD 2013.

Note: this could be due to the formats in which such information is presented, physical inaccessibility of services or a need for support to access this information, which may not be forthcoming where the abuser is also a woman's carer or a family member/intimate partner. Submissions to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Half-day of General Discussion on Women and Girls with Disabilities – 17 April 2013: all these submissions are available at <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRPD/Pages/DGD17April2013.aspx>

<sup>v</sup> UK CEDAW Working Group CRPD 2013. Human Rights Watch CRPD 2013. International Development Law Organization CRPD 2013. Submissions to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Half-day of General Discussion on Women and Girls with Disabilities – 17 April 2013: all these submissions are available at <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRPD/Pages/DGD17April2013.aspx>